

# Etching Hill CofE (C) Primary School

Penk Drive North, Etching Hill, Rugeley, WS15 2XY

**Inspection dates** 26–27 November 2013

|                                |                      |              |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Good         | 2        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Good         | 2        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Good         | 2        |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Good         | 2        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- School leaders manage teachers' performance well. They have successfully improved teaching and learning since the previous inspection by training staff to reflect on their practice and play a full part in improving outcomes for the pupils.
- Pupils achieve well. This is because teaching is good, pupils want to learn and do well, and staff work as a cohesive team to make learning continuous and effective for them.
- Although attainment is still average in Year 2 and Year 6, it is higher than at the previous inspection and continues to improve. An increasing proportion of pupils are working at standards above those expected for their age.
- Pupils behave well. They are proud of their school, feel safe and well-cared-for, and are very respectful and caring towards others. They are particularly proud of achieving the 'Rights Respecting School' award and try hard to live up to it.
- Parents are very satisfied with the school and what it does for their children. Almost all say their children are happy and safe, and that they are taught to behave well.
- Governors support and challenge the school in equal measure. They are well informed about its work, understand data, ask searching questions about it, and join the leadership team in checking teaching and learning.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to secure outstanding progress for the pupils.
- Weaknesses in spelling spoil the quality of pupils' writing, and opportunities are missed to reinforce key writing points when marking pupils' work.
- Pupils do not systematically use and apply their mathematical skills in different subjects. They are not sufficiently encouraged to do so.
- Higher attaining pupils are not always moved onto their tasks soon enough in lessons to give them the opportunity to take their learning even further.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching in 25 lessons. These included two that were observed jointly with the headteacher. The team also observed play and lunchtime, and visited the after-school club.
- Discussions were held with pupils, governors, staff, and a representative of the local authority.
- The views of the 50 parents who completed the online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account, as were the views gained through informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day.
- The views of the 30 staff who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire for staff were also considered.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including information about pupils' progress and attendance, the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation document and records and policies about safeguarding.
- The team also examined the work in pupils' books, including some from last year, sampled sessions where pupils were learning how to link letters and sound (phonics), and listened to pupils read.

## Inspection team

Doris Bell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Terence Mortimer

Additional Inspector

Russell Hinton

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized-primary school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional funding, known as the pupil premium, is below average. This funding is, for example, for children in local authority care, and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor targets, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has its own before- and after-school clubs. A privately-run pre-school, which is inspected separately, shares a room with the school's own Nursery.

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

- Establish a greater proportion of outstanding teaching, and therefore learning, particularly in writing and mathematics, by:
  - improving pupils' spelling and marking their writing skills better when they are used in other subjects
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical learning in different subjects
  - ensuring that higher-attaining pupils are moved onto their tasks as quickly as possible in all lessons.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start Nursery with skills below those typical of their age, as do the majority of those who join Reception not having attended the school's own Nursery. All make good progress and are well-prepared for their work in Year 1.
- Pupils achieve well. Data held by the school was fully explained in relation to individual pupils and year groups. It was also checked against pupils' work this year and last. All show that progress has improved since the previous inspection and that the rate of progress is gathering pace across the school. The pupils' good attitudes to learning contribute to all of this.
- The analysis of pupils' work, documentation tracking their progress, and the ambitious but achievable targets set for 2014 all show that the upward trend in attainment is set to continue. Several year groups are already producing work ahead of that expected for their ages.
- The results of the phonics screening check for pupils in Year 1 were above those found nationally. Pupils use their phonics skills well to help them read. They enjoy reading and are eager to share books with others, or read their written work out to each other or an adult.
- Pupils' writing is becoming increasingly imaginative as they learn to use different styles and a wider range of vocabulary to evoke feeling and mood. This was noted in an outstanding Year 6 lesson where, because of excellent preparation, pupils were able to write with feeling what they themselves recognised as an informal letter.
- Although they frequently write in other subjects, pupils do not always transfer the skills they learn in literacy lessons to that writing. Spelling is relatively weak, particularly among older pupils who have not benefited from phonics teaching in their earlier years.
- Pupils use and apply their mathematical skills in different ways as they solve problems requiring them in mathematics lessons. For example, they worked out what combinations of colours could be used to stack dishes more attractively in a cupboard, calculated perimeters and areas, or converted metric weights to imperial. However, they do not use their mathematical learning much in different subjects because they are not sufficiently encouraged to do so.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Their learning is broken down into the smaller steps they need to take, and well-briefed and well-trained support staff ensure they achieve success.
- Higher attaining pupils are also making good progress. Their learning is boosted by specialist teaching, for example, in mathematics, or by making use of the school's close links with the high school. They do not always get onto their tasks soon enough in some lessons, however, and this slows their progress.
- In 2013, pupils who qualified for the pupil premium were just over half a term behind other pupils in the school in reading and writing, compared with over two terms nationally. In mathematics, they were over three terms behind, compared with two-and-a-half terms nationally. Their progress was ahead of other pupils in writing, equalled it in reading, but was behind in mathematics. The gaps in their attainment and progress have closed compared with the previous year because of the concerted actions the school has taken to support these pupils.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Almost all teaching is good, and a small and increasing proportion is outstanding. Teaching inspires pupils and makes them want to learn more.
- Relationships are excellent. The rapport between staff and pupils, and between the pupils themselves, gives pupils the confidence to ask as well as answer questions, and to suggest to each other how to improve their work. The staff's high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour are met well. They contribute to the pupils' increasingly good progress.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge effectively to extend pupils' learning. Well-targeted open-ended questions and opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning with each other extend pupils' ability to think for themselves. Skilled teaching and support staff, all of whom are deployed well, adjust learning daily and in lessons, in response to how well pupils are doing.
- Reading and phonics are taught well from an early age, enabling pupils to read fluently, and to understand what they read. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are taught well. They benefit from well-targeted support as individuals or in small groups. Pupils who qualify for the pupil premium receive similar help. These pupils are taught in different groups according to their different ability levels.
- The more recent focus on raising the achievement of higher-attaining pupils is having a marked impact on the pupils' learning. Nevertheless, some staff still do not move these pupils onto their tasks soon enough in lessons to enable them to take their learning as far as they can.
- Marking is supportive, encouraging and developmental, and pupils understand the importance of responding to teachers' comments. They readily explain and show in their work how they use those comments to help them improve. Good marking also takes place in different subjects but, in topic work, opportunities are missed to reinforce key writing points.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- All pupils and parents to whom inspectors spoke, and almost all parents who responded to the online questionnaire, agree that behaviour is good, pupils are safe and well-cared-for right from Nursery, and they very much enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet, social networking sites, or mobile phones. They report that bullying, though rare, does occur occasionally. They know what to do about it and say that it is dealt with quickly and effectively. The school's behaviour log bears this out.
- Pupils are confident that any member of staff will help them should they have any concerns, reporting, for example, that staff will 'fight your corner'. They understand and appreciate the systems of rewards and sanctions that promote good behaviour.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning and are eager to do well. They understand the steps identified in their targets, explaining how they help them to 'move up the sublevels', and to evaluate their own and each other's learning. Nevertheless, they also report that 'sometimes your brain floats away' but 'the teacher brings you back again quickly'.
- Much is in place to encourage pupils to become independent by finding ways to improve their own learning. In many lessons they work well independently, getting on conscientiously without

close supervision and trying their best. Nevertheless, that independence is not fully there because some pupils still wait with their hands up for support from an adult, meaning that they lose valuable learning time.

- Pupils have a strong voice in the school and know their views are valued. They take responsibility well, for example, as school councillors, who seek the views of their classmates and bring them to senior management for consideration.
- Pupils are proud of their school and of its becoming a 'Rights Respecting School'. An example of their maturity is evident in the decision that the school council and the 'Rights Squad' have taken to work together for the benefit of all pupils while maintaining their individual roles and responsibilities.
- Attendance is above average. The before- and after-school clubs give the many pupils who attend a good start and a relaxing finish to their day.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher's vision of becoming an outstanding school is shared by all staff and governors. She has trained and coached senior leaders, and those who manage different subjects and aspects, in how to observe lessons, analyse pupils' work and glean information from a wide range of other resources. In this way, she has established their understanding of the part they play in improving teaching and learning.
- Monitoring and evaluation activities are robust. Other staff sometimes join leaders in these activities to learn from them and to prepare themselves for leadership roles. Identified areas for improvement are followed up with support in school or well-considered external professional development opportunities.
- Teamwork throughout the school is almost tangible as staff plan together and support each other. All of the above, plus the improvement since the previous inspection, gives the school strong capacity for further improvement.
- Assessment systems are well-established. The outcomes are used to identify and tackle any potential underachievement and to set ambitious targets for staff and pupils. The joint moderation of pupils' written work in and across year groups, and with neighbouring schools, ensures that assessments are accurate.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. Links between it, the priorities in the school improvement plan and the targets set during the management of teachers' performance have contributed to the pupils' improved progress.
- Provision for children in Nursery and Reception is led and managed well. The Nursery dovetails its provision very effectively with the pre-school that shares its room, so that the children's learning experiences are not affected and their social development is enhanced.
- Good leadership and management of the provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs ensure that pupils' targets are broken down into small, measurable steps, and progress towards them is tracked well.
- The school works hard to eliminate discrimination of any sort. It successfully promotes equality of opportunity for all by teaching pupils to be respectful of others regardless of faith, culture or

background.

- The wide range of well-attended extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors that enhance the well-planned curriculum includes opportunities for pupils from all age groups. The curriculum engages pupils' well by taking account of their interests, and staff are skilled at using what pupils already know to take their learning further. Nevertheless, not enough is done to promote mathematical skills as effectively as literacy skills in different subjects.
- The local authority provides an appropriate level of support for the school, because it is rightly confident of the school leadership's ability to continue the improvement seen to date.
- Safeguarding procedures, including those for child protection, meet the government's current requirements. All training is up to date.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body knows the school well. It understands data and what it says about pupils' progress, and uses the information to challenge the school to do even better. Governors gain their information from comprehensive headteachers' reports, frequent visits to the school to join senior leaders in checking teaching and learning, and meetings with staff to check the areas for which they have taken responsibility. Governors also support the headteacher in making decisions about staffing and about pay related to staff performance. They have also supported her well in taking difficult decisions when underperformance had to be tackled. They check that all spending, including pupil premium funding, is being used effectively to raise standards. Pupils and staff are already enjoying the additional physical education and sporting activities made available as a result of the governors' sensible decisions on how to use the primary schools sports funding. This is contributing positively to their well-being as well as their skills.

## What inspection judgements mean

| School  |                      |  |
|---------|----------------------|--|
| Grade   | Judgement            | Description  |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding          | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
| Grade 2 | Good                 | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.   |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate           | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |



## School details

|                                |               |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 124292        |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Staffordshire |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 427000        |

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

|  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                          |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary controlled             |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3–11                             |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                            |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 373                              |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body               |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Zoe Johnston                     |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Marie Smith                      |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 12 September 2011                |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01889 256112                     |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01889 256116                     |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | office@etchinghill.staffs.sch.uk |

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