

# Elmsleigh Infant and Nursery School

Queen's Drive, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE11 0EG

## Inspection dates

29–30 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' actions to raise standards for pupils in key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics have not been thoroughly implemented and effectively evaluated.
- Middle leaders are beginning to take a more active role in driving improvements to raise standards. However, many actions are in the early stages and have not yet been fully evaluated.
- Pupils do not have a thorough enough understanding of beliefs and cultures outside their immediate community.
- Leaders have not ensured that teaching assistants in the mainstream classes are used to effectively support pupils to make good progress in their learning.
- The quality of teaching and learning across key stage 1 is inconsistent.
- Not all teachers match work well to pupils' needs. Too few pupils make good progress or attain as highly as they should. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils.
- Some teachers are too slow to deal with pupils' misconceptions in their learning. This hinders their progress, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Teachers do not consistently set high expectations for pupils' handwriting in different subjects.
- Provision in the outdoor area of the early years does not promote children's learning as effectively as it should.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children in the early years make a good start to their school lives. They are nurtured and make good progress in their learning.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare is developed well through the school's curriculum and nurture provision. Relationships between pupils and staff are caring and positive.
- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those with additional needs, are very well supported by highly skilled staff and carefully planned learning.
- Leaders and governors are committed to the school. They have a good understanding of the needs of the community it serves. Parents and carers greatly appreciate the guidance and advice they receive to support their children's education and well-being.

## Full report

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

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance to drive more rapid improvement by ensuring that:
  - leaders at all levels, including governors, take swift action in response to the findings of monitoring activities
  - middle leaders are supported to develop their roles so that they clearly understand their responsibilities and have a strong impact on improving outcomes for pupils
  - pupils have a good understanding of different cultures and beliefs outside their immediate community, to better prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in order to accelerate pupils' progress, by:
  - using assessment information to set work that is well-matched to pupils' abilities, especially for the most able
  - insisting that improved teaching strategies for reading, writing and mathematics are effectively implemented across all year groups and classes
  - ensuring that teachers promptly address pupils' misconceptions so that they can improve their work and make strong progress in a range of subjects
  - ensuring that teaching assistants in the mainstream classes are more effectively deployed to accelerate pupils' progress in lessons
  - ensuring that teachers insist on high standards in pupils' handwriting across different subjects.
- Further improve the quality of teaching and learning in the early years by developing the outdoor provision to more effectively meet children's learning needs.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, standards have declined. Actions to improve the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standards by the end of key stage 1 have not been precise. Leaders have not ensured that approaches to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment have been effectively and consistently applied across the school.
- After a period of substantial change and challenge to the school, including building work and changes to staffing, leaders have been frustrated with the lack of support from the local authority. They have not received appropriate support from the local authority to help them raise standards and to ensure the school is well placed to meet the increasingly complex needs of pupils attending the school.
- Leaders are passionate and determined to improve the school. They recognise that the period of turbulence and change has led to the pace of improvement being too slow. They have recently begun to put appropriate and sustainable actions into place to drive more effective improvements. For example, the recent restructuring of some classes and ongoing improvements to the way teachers plan for different pupils' needs are beginning to have a positive effect. Teachers have raised their expectations for what pupils can achieve. However, the impact of these changes is not fully embedded and there are still inconsistencies across key stage 1.
- School development plans have not been closely monitored to ensure that actions are timely and consistently effective. Leaders do not use the range of information available about the performance of the school as strategically as they should to identify immediate priorities for improvement. For example, they have not ensured that the most able pupils make the progress they should in their learning.
- School leaders have not ensured that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good across the school. Too many pupils in key stage 1 do not make the progress or reach the standards they are capable of, particularly in English and mathematics.
- The roles of middle leaders have recently been changed to ensure that improvements in English and mathematics are more precisely focused. Middle leaders are knowledgeable and have begun to implement improved teaching strategies for reading, writing and mathematics. They have trained staff in the new techniques to help them to develop their practice. However, middle leaders are still developing their understanding of their responsibilities to drive improvement and some actions are in the early stages of planning and implementation.
- The curriculum is planned to be broad and balanced and meet pupils' needs. Leaders adapted their plans to interest pupils in their learning as well as broaden their life experiences. Pupils' spiritual, moral, personal and social development is promoted well through a variety of topics of learning and extra-curricular experiences. For example, a residential trip to Beaumanor Hall helped pupils to learn how people lived in Victorian times and gave them the experience of being away from home overnight. Another example is the 'beach day', where the school was turned into a beach for pupils to experience the seaside. They played in the sand, enjoyed donkey rides and watched a

Punch and Judy show. For some pupils, this was their first experience of what it is like to visit the beach. Pupils have opportunities to learn about faiths and cultures through the school's curriculum. However, leaders have not ensured that pupils have a thorough enough understanding of what this means for life outside their immediate community.

- Leaders use the pupil premium funding to ensure that disadvantaged pupils receive carefully targeted additional adult support and focused activities. These actions support pupils' good attendance and develop their well-being. The school's use of the funding is having a positive impact on raising the attainment of some disadvantaged pupils. Nevertheless, the most able disadvantaged pupils do not make the progress they should in their learning.
- The additional sports funding received by the school is used well to develop pupils' physical fitness, health and well-being. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to access a variety of sports activities. South Derbyshire School Sport Partnership provide valuable training for staff and their expertise is used well to improve pupils' physical fitness. For example, pupils take part in a daily mile as well as lunchtime and after-school sports clubs. Children in the early years are taught to balance and ride bicycles through 'Bikeability' lessons.
- Leaders have reviewed the teaching of phonics to ensure that the proportion of pupils reaching the required standard in the phonics screening check increases. Staff training, precise monitoring and improved teaching strategies have had a positive impact. Inspectors' observations of phonics lessons and of pupils' reading indicate that an increasing proportion of pupils are on track to achieve the expected standard this year.
- Leadership of provision for pupils with SEND is effective. Leaders ensure that support for these pupils is specifically tailored to meet their individual needs. There is an effective system for the early identification of pupils' needs and staff work well with external agencies to seek advice where necessary. The enhanced resource provision is well led and provides pupils with bespoke support. Staff receive regular and relevant training so that provision is appropriate and enables pupils to make good progress.
- Leadership of the school's nurture group provision is good. Leaders ensure that pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs are well supported by highly skilled adults in a warm, caring environment.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors are highly committed to the school. They have a comprehensive grasp of the challenges the school faces and of the diverse needs of the community which the school serves. However, they have not held leaders sufficiently to account for the decline in standards. They have not ensured that all pupils, particularly the most able, make strong progress in their learning and attain the standards of which they are capable.
- Governors are reflective and eager to improve their effectiveness. The recent restructuring of the governing body and its committees has ensured that governors are in a better position to hold leaders to account. They are accessing appropriate training to develop their strategic knowledge of the school. Governors are increasingly aware of the weaker aspects of the school and have a more precise understanding of what

needs to be improved.

- Governors have a good understanding of how well leaders allocate and monitor additional funding received by the school such as the pupil premium and funding for pupils with SEND. They are aware of their responsibility to ensure the funding is used effectively to improve the progress and well-being of these pupils. They have accurately identified that leaders' actions to improve the progress and attainment of the most able disadvantaged pupils lack precision.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's single central record did not meet requirements at the beginning of the inspection. The record did not show that all necessary checks on staff had been completed. These omissions were rectified during the inspection and the single central record was updated to reflect this and to meet statutory requirements.
- Leaders for safeguarding are well informed about safeguarding practices and about the pupils in the school. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and relevant updates. They are alert to signs which may indicate that a pupil may be at risk or vulnerable. Leaders take prompt action when concerns are raised.
- Systems to safeguard pupils are known by all staff. Leaders keep detailed records of any incidents that occur and are tenacious in seeking appropriate support for pupils and their families. Records for safeguarding show that leaders work diligently to ensure that vulnerable families receive the support they need. Leaders work very effectively with external agencies, when necessary, to ensure pupils' well-being and safety.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning across key stage 1 is inconsistent. Over time, the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics has not enabled all pupils to make good progress in these subjects.
- Teachers in key stage 1 do not accurately match work to pupils' needs. This is particularly the case for the most able pupils. This means that some pupils do not make the progress in lessons of which they are capable.
- Some teachers do not deal with pupils' misunderstandings and errors in their learning quickly enough. Too many pupils, including the most able, repeat errors or make less progress because they do not clearly understand or are not supported to learn from their mistakes.
- Recent improvements in the teaching of reading are beginning to have a positive effect. The purchase of good-quality books to motivate pupils and the introduction of focused, daily reading sessions is raising the profile of reading for pleasure. A new approach to the teaching of reading is helping pupils to develop their skills and improve their understanding of the vocabulary in the texts they are reading. However, these improvements have not yet been effectively implemented across all classes.
- The teaching of writing is beginning to improve in some classes but is not yet consistently good. Some teachers have received good-quality training for a way to

teach writing. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that where this has been successfully introduced by teachers, pupils are supported to think carefully about the features of their writing and develop their vocabulary. However, this is in the very early stages of development and some teachers have yet to receive training in this new way of working.

- Teachers do not have high expectations for pupils' handwriting in their work across different subjects. The new strategy for the teaching of handwriting is not yet consistently taught or insisted on by teachers.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving across most classes in the school. Work in pupils' books and the inspectors' observations of teaching show that teachers provide increasingly regular opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematics skills to solve problems and explain their understanding. Pupils use a variety of equipment and images to support their learning. However, pupils are not challenged to extend their learning and deepen their thinking soon enough in lessons. Too often, the most able pupils sit and wait for other pupils to finish before they can move on in their learning.
- Many teaching assistants throughout the school demonstrate highly skilled, good practice. However, teaching assistants in the mainstream part of the school are not always effectively deployed in lessons to help pupils to learn well and extend their understanding.
- Relationships between teachers and teaching assistants and pupils are very positive. Adults encourage pupils, are caring and good humoured. This has a positive effect in motivating pupils, including those with SEND, in their learning.
- The quality of teaching and learning in the enhanced resource class is good. Pupils receive high-quality care, provision and learning that are carefully planned to meet their needs. For example, pupils make good progress with their learning in phonics because teachers precisely match activities to what pupils need to learn. They use appropriate resources to stimulate pupils' interests and set high expectations for pupils' behaviour and learning.
- Some teachers' subject knowledge is good. Where this is strong, teachers model appropriate subject-specific vocabulary well. This is not the case in all classes.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Pupils who read to inspectors were able to use their phonics knowledge to read unfamiliar words. Pupils were observed in lessons using their phonic knowledge to support their spelling in their writing.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners. When teachers match work well to pupils' abilities and maintain high expectations pupils respond very positively. For example, pupils were inspired in an English lesson because activities had been carefully chosen to challenge and stretch their thinking. Pupils were excited when working together to create imaginative clues for their teacher using a range of adjectives. They were thrilled when their teacher was able to use their clues to guess the title of a book.

**Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

## Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school has a nurturing atmosphere that is highly conducive to learning. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and caring. Staff know pupils well and are encouraging and positive.
- Provision for pupils in the enhanced resource class is extremely effective. Highly skilled staff use a range of effective techniques to keep pupils safe, reassure them and engage them in their learning. Pupils build trusting relationships with adults and are well cared for.
- The large majority of parents and carers who spoke with inspectors said that their children are happy, safe and well looked after at school. They greatly appreciate the support they receive from staff to improve their parenting skills, including through 'The Incredible Years' parenting programme. A typical comment was, 'Staff go above and beyond to help in all situations and the school is always a happy, bright place to be.'
- Pupils are taught how to keep safe in different situations. For example, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and to recognise the potential dangers from strangers. Visitors to school from organisations such as the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children help to reinforce messages to keep pupils safe from abuse.
- Pupils socialise well and are confident to express their opinions. They have opportunities to develop their confidence and understanding of wider world issues through their elected positions as members of the school council. Through these roles, they are encouraged to take part in decision-making for the school.
- Some pupils are taught for part of the week in the school's highly effective nurture group provision. Adults support pupils through a programme of bespoke activities to develop their self-esteem, improve their social skills and reinforce positive attitudes and good behaviour.
- Leaders promote healthy lifestyles effectively. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their physical fitness through a range of sporting activities including weekly swimming lessons and the daily lunchtime mile. Pupils were able to explain to inspectors how to stay healthy by eating well and exercising regularly. They appreciate the nurture sessions which support their mental and emotional health.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school is a welcoming and friendly place to learn. Pupils are polite and confident to talk to adults, including visitors to the school. They say they enjoy their learning and like coming to school.
- Pupils have a good understanding about the expectations for their behaviour. They say that incidents of poor behaviour or bullying sometimes happen but when they occur staff deal with them effectively. When some pupils struggle with their behaviour staff respond promptly and skilfully. Pupils are given time and support to manage their

behaviour in a nurturing environment.

- In lessons, pupils cooperate well and show mutual respect. Relationships are positive. However, in some lessons pupils lose concentration if their work is not well matched to their needs.
- Attendance is just below the national average. Some pupils who attend the school require periods of sustained absence due to long-term medical conditions. Leaders monitor the attendance of pupils scrupulously. They work closely with leaders for safeguarding and consult with external agencies when needed. They ensure that families are supported, and pupils are safe and attend school regularly. Leaders demonstrate significant improvements for some individual pupils who have previously had very low attendance. Nevertheless, improving attendance remains a high priority for leaders.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils have declined since the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 has steadily declined over a period of three years.
- The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check has been well below the national average for the past three years. In 2018, the proportion increased but remains below national averages. Current school information indicates that an increased proportion of pupils are on track to improve this attainment further this year.
- Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics across key stage 1 is inconsistent. Scrutiny of pupils' work and current school assessment information show that some pupils do not make the progress in their learning that they could.
- The most able pupils in the school, including the most able disadvantaged, do not make the progress that they are capable of in a variety of subjects, including in English and mathematics.
- The majority of disadvantaged pupils make similar and sometimes better progress in English and mathematics than their non-disadvantaged peers.
- The progress of pupils with SEND, including those who benefit from the enhanced resource provision, is carefully monitored by leaders. The large majority make good progress from their different starting points. Where pupils make less progress, additional adult support and activities are appropriately planned to meet pupils' needs well.

### Early years provision

### Good

- Leadership of the early years is good. Staff demonstrate their enthusiasm for all children to access exciting learning experiences through the good-quality provision across the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Children in the Nursery Year settle quickly into their school life. Staff establish good relationships with parents through home visits and regular informal meetings. This



ensures that children's learning and care needs are met well.

- Relationships between adults and children across the Nursery and Reception classes are strong. Well-structured routines mean that children are confident learners and are kept safe. They play and learn well together. Their behaviour is good.
- The early years classes are inclusive. Teachers carefully check the progress of children's learning. They use the range of evidence they collect from their assessments to ensure that children are making good progress in different areas of the curriculum. Disadvantaged children and children with SEND are well supported. Additional adult support and activities are specifically planned to meet children's needs. These include access to the enhanced resource and nurture provision when needed.
- Adults in the early years use language well to support children in their learning. Good-quality questioning is used effectively to challenge children to extend their vocabulary. Additional support is specifically focused to help children with their early language acquisition.
- Children's reading, writing and mathematics skills are taught well in the early years. Teachers plan for children to develop their skills through stimulating learning activities that are designed to match children's needs and interests. For example, children's enjoyment of reading the story of 'The gingerbread man' was used to inspire them to use story maps to rewrite the story. They made and used puppets to recreate the story in the puppet theatre. In another activity, children developed their understanding of measuring by comparing the weight of different objects, using scales. The adult skilfully guided children to use the correct mathematical vocabulary to explain their findings.
- Communication with parents is good. Parents appreciate the approachable staff and the support they receive to help their children with their learning.
- The large majority of children start the Nursery Year with skills well below typical for their age. Over recent years the proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year has been below national average. However, good teaching and nurturing enable children to make good progress. Scrutiny of children's work, current school assessment information and observations during lessons show that effective teaching strategies are having a positive impact on children's learning. The majority of children are making good progress from their starting points in the different areas of learning. However, due to their very low starting points, a significant proportion of children do not reach a good level of development, which impacts on their start to Year 1.
- The stimulating indoor learning environments provide children with a range of opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding and imaginative play, in different areas of the curriculum. However, provision in the outside areas does not promote children's learning as well as it could. Leaders are in the process of developing plans to make the necessary improvements.

## School details

Unique reference number	112694
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10086752

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kelly Banister
Headteacher	Karen Burton
Telephone number	01283 216883
Website	<a href="http://www.elmsleighinfantschool.co.uk">www.elmsleighinfantschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@elmsleigh.derbyshire.sch.uk">headteacher@elmsleigh.derbyshire.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	14–15 May 2013

## Information about this school

- Elmsleigh Infant and Nursery School is a smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and of pupils who speak English as an additional language are below those seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well above the national average.
- The school has an enhanced resource provision for pupils with SEND, specialising in autism spectrum disorder.
- The school provides Nursery provision for children from the age of three years.
- Pupils are sometimes taught in the school's nurture group provision which is located adjacent to the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all year groups, including some joint observations with senior leaders. In addition to observing the teaching of reading, inspectors listened to pupils read. They talked to pupils about their school and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, and other senior and middle leaders, including those for English and mathematics. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day and took account of the 23 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including: the school's self-evaluation of current performance and plans for improvement; the school's most recent information on the achievement and progress of pupils; information relating to safeguarding; information about behaviour management; information relating to the school's use of the pupil premium funding and funding for pupils with SEND; the school's most recent information relating to the attendance of pupils; and minutes from meetings of the governing body.

## Inspection team

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jay Virk	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Ward	Ofsted Inspector

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