

Inspection of a good school: The Echelford Primary School

Park Road, Ashford, Surrey TW15 1EX

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 November 2021

Outcome

The Echelford Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love coming to Echelford Primary School. They enjoy learning and are eager to tackle the challenges of the school's ambitious and interesting curriculum. Pupils particularly value learning and playing in the various places around the school and its grounds. For example, pupils love to learn in the 'lighthouse', where they get inspiration for their artwork and writing. They enjoy playing and relaxing in the school's 'secret garden'.

Pupils feel safe and they know that their well-being matters to staff. Pupils value the opportunity to talk about their worries and their feelings. They welcome the support they are given by staff, including the emotional literacy support assistant and the home school link worker.

Pupils get along well. They are kind to one another. Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming. Older pupils act as 'playground pals' to help make playtimes enjoyable for all. They organise games and support pupils who may be feeling sad or lonely.

Pupils form positive relationships with one another, and bullying is rare. Any incidents of bullying or poor behaviour are dealt with quickly by adults. One pupil said: 'The teachers always do something about it, they never ignore the bad stuff.'

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

Leaders at all levels are relentless in their efforts to continually improve the quality of education. They have high expectations of all pupils. Leaders have created a carefully planned curriculum. They have identified the order in which pupils learn important skills and knowledge. Leaders enrich the curriculum with a wide range of different opportunities.

Learning to read is a priority from the moment children start school. Children make a strong start learning phonics in the early years. Teachers make phonics lessons exciting.

Children are eager to use their new phonics knowledge when reading unknown words. As pupils move into Year 1, they continue to achieve well. They develop a good understanding of phonics. This gives them a strong foundation for reading and writing. Pupils of all ages enjoy their teachers reading to them. Teachers choose interesting books that challenge pupils to think about important issues. For example, teachers select books about friendship and bullying.

Leaders and teachers check pupils' understanding effectively. Teachers quickly identify any gaps in pupils' learning. Teachers identify any special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) that pupils may have accurately. Staff use this information to plan extra support to help these pupils with their learning. For example, teachers use 'do now' sessions at the start of lessons to recap previous learning. Staff skilfully question and guide pupils with SEND. This means that they can successfully access the same learning as their classmates.

Teachers are knowledgeable and make learning interesting. They explain important concepts clearly using subject-specific vocabulary. Teachers skilfully show pupils what they need to do to be successful in their learning. In the early years, teachers help children to settle in quickly and to learn the school's routines. Teachers are sensitive and reassuring when they need to correct children's behaviour. Children feel safe and supported. Pupils enjoy activities such as trips and events. For example, pupils learned about the food people ate in Tudor times by taking part in a Tudor banquet. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and work hard in lessons. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in classrooms.

Pupils learn important knowledge and skills across the curriculum. In most subjects, pupils draw on what they already know to help them when learning new things. Pupils explain their understanding with confidence. For example, in history pupils showed a secure understanding of when historical events happened. They were able to talk about the causes and consequences of these events. In some subjects, however, pupils do not remember as much as they could. This is because leaders have not identified what pupils need to learn precisely enough. Leaders are in the process of refining the curriculum to ensure that all subjects outline the knowledge pupils need to learn.

Leaders support pupils' well-being and promote their personal development well. Teachers plan a range of opportunities for pupils to develop important skills and attributes. For example, pupils do tasks to practise their problem-solving, teamwork and leadership skills. Leaders organise activities that open pupils' eyes to a wide range of exciting careers. This encourages pupils to have high aspirations.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. All adults working in school know that keeping children safe is paramount. Staff take their responsibility for this seriously. Leaders make sure that all adults are given thorough training so that they know how to keep pupils safe from harm.

Leaders ensure that pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe through the curriculum. For example, in computing, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online. Pupils use technology safely and know what to do if they are worried or feel unsafe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum that cumulatively builds pupils' knowledge and skills in all subjects. Pupils achieve well overall. However, the specific knowledge that pupils will learn is not as clearly identified as it could be in some subjects. Leaders are in the process of addressing this. Leaders should continue to refine their subject plans, making sure that these identify exactly what knowledge pupils should be taught and when. Leaders should then ensure that the refined curriculum becomes fully embedded so that all pupils achieve consistently well in all subjects.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2016.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	140034
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10200296
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	619
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ray Vango
Headteacher	Karla Pearson (co-headteacher) Karen Oakley (co-headteacher)
Website	www.echelfordprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	1 and 2 November 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Lumen Learning Trust.
- The school offers breakfast and after-school childcare provision for pupils in the school.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff and pupils. An inspector also met with the chair of the school's local governing body and the chair of the Lumen Learning Trust board of directors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, computing and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.

- To inspect the school’s safeguarding arrangements, inspectors met with leaders responsible for safeguarding and looked at relevant documentation, staff recruitment checks and training records. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views. This included formal meetings with pupils and informal discussions during playtime, lunchtime and in lessons. Inspectors also considered the responses to the pupils’ survey.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and staff to gather their views. Inspectors also considered parents’ responses to Parent View and staff’s responses to the survey for staff.

Inspection team

Leah Goulding, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lizzie Jeanes

Ofsted Inspector

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