

Queen Eleanor's Church of England Junior School

Queen Eleanor's Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 7SD

Inspection dates 10–11 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. Their attainment in English and mathematics is well above average by Year 6 and improving further.
- The headteacher's leadership is strong. His drive and ambition, combined with the good leadership of other leaders and the governing body, has generated many improvements.
- Teaching and learning are good and some is outstanding. Teachers systematically build pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum within stimulating lessons.
- Pupils at risk of not doing well make good progress because they are given well-judged support for developing basic skills.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and their attendance is high. They say they feel safe in school and that they are treated fairly.
- Regular and thorough checks are made on the quality of teaching and how well pupils are achieving. Leaders quickly identify any teaching not meeting their high expectations, and provide focused staff training.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although teaching is good, not enough is yet outstanding.
- Teachers do not focus sufficiently on ensuring that all lower-attaining pupils consistently use phonics (the links between letters and sounds) to read and write.
- A few pupils do not spell accurately or write neatly because not enough is done to reinforce these skills.
- Occasionally, teaching assistants do too much for lower attaining pupils which restricts opportunities for their independent learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, of which six were joint observations with the headteacher, and from most year groups they heard a sample of pupils reading.
- Inspectors had discussions with pupils, looked at a wide range of their work, and examined the school's data on pupils' attainment and progress.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body, senior and middle leaders, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 92 responses to the online Parent View survey, the few parents' and carers' letters to inspectors and the staff's responses to inspectors.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a broad selection of documents, including plans for improvement, safeguarding arrangements, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and records of school leaders' evaluations of teaching in lessons.

Inspection team

Eileen Chadwick, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Anthony Green

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Queen Eleanor's is an average-sized junior school.
- Most pupils are White British, although approximately one tenth speak English as an additional language, which is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is a little above average. The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average. These pupils' needs mainly relate to speech, language, literacy and numeracy difficulties, and also to behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, which is additional funding provided for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families, is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher took up his post two years ago. Since then a new senior leadership team, including the deputy headteacher, has been appointed, and substantial changes have been made to the governing body, including the election of a new Chair of the Governing Body.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding by making sure all teachers:
 - consistently encourage pupils to apply phonics skills when reading and spelling
 - check that teaching assistants help lower-attaining pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning
 - apply a consistent system for teaching phonics and handwriting throughout the school and ensure that this is systematically also applied by all staff.
- Raise achievement in literacy by:
 - strengthening lower-attaining pupils' phonics skills and their ability to apply these when reading, particularly when tackling words new to them
 - ensuring pupils take greater care to improve their handwriting and spelling skills, especially their consistent application of phonics when spelling.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 3 is above average, and pupils make good progress as they move through the school. As a result, by Year 6 their attainment is well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Achievement overall is therefore good, and a minority of average and more-able pupils make outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, the proportion reaching higher levels is rising quickly, and over a half reach higher levels in English and mathematics. There is a small legacy of underachievement for a few middle- and lower-attaining pupils, but careful monitoring and targeted teaching are rectifying this issue.
- Pupils develop their reading skills well. They quickly become avid readers and are equally adept when researching for information, as, for example, when reading fiction. However, when inspectors listened to pupils read it was evident that a few lower-attaining pupils do not always use phonics as competently as they should when reading new words.
- Pupils use their writing skills effectively across the curriculum although they are not always careful enough with their spelling and handwriting. Pupils' progress in mathematics has accelerated due to the school's strong focus on improving teaching in this subject.
- The drive to improve mathematics has borne fruit, evidence from lessons seen during the inspection showing that pupils are often very numerate. In all year groups pupils were observed using a good range of approaches when solving problems. This was particularly evident in Year 5 where pupils of all abilities competently selected their most efficient mental methods for solving subtraction problems.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in literacy and numeracy. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make good progress. Additional support for these pupils is well organised and their progress carefully monitored. However, in class, the progress of those with literacy difficulties occasionally slows when staff do too much for them. For example, in writing lessons, staff sometimes provide words for pupils rather than encouraging them to sound out words for themselves.
- The school is successfully closing the achievement gap for pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, with the result that almost all are making good progress in line with their peers, to the extent that their average points scores (APS) are close to the APS of non-free school meals pupils. This is partly due to resources being used to provide additional staffing to support pupils from this group who may otherwise have fallen behind.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is consistently good across the school and occasionally outstanding. Lessons are well prepared and teachers plan activities which build on pupils' previous learning. Lessons are structured well and teachers constantly share with pupils what they are expected to learn.
- Teachers are often skilled at providing stimulating learning opportunities for pupils, who understand and respond well to high expectations set for learning and behaviour. Whiteboard technology, computers, real experiences and practical resources are used successfully to capture pupils' interest. Pupils are often enabled to develop their independent-learning and problem-solving skills as well as learning through listening and watching.
- The stimulating curriculum provides a good basis for developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, while enabling teachers to help pupils to apply their basic skills to other subjects as well. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils wrote very imaginative and well-constructed newspaper reports about problems facing the local community after they had learned about local flooding issues.
- Pupils say they are taught well and not bored. Also, most parents and carers who completed Parent View and those who wrote to inspectors agreed with their children that teaching is good.

- Teachers mark pupils' work clearly and pupils are involved in assessing their own understanding. This is effective in helping pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and provides valuable feedback for teachers. Pupils are clear about their targets for improvement.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in English and mathematics is mostly good. The development of literacy skills is given a strong focus. Systematic procedures are in place across the school, for example, to develop guided reading, and to ensure an appropriate balance between grammar and creative writing lessons in every class. However, teachers occasionally miss opportunities to enable pupils to apply their phonics skills to perfect their spelling, and do not all use the same approach to teaching handwriting.
- Teaching assistants often provide good quality support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. However, there are a few instances when they do too much for pupils with lower standards in literacy and numeracy. Staff do not always insist these pupils apply phonics when reading and writing which limits their progress because they are not being challenged enough.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils behave exceptionally well. An atmosphere of mutual respect pervades the school and this is reflected in the responses to the staff questionnaire and in Parent View.
- Pupils enjoy and value their school and this is reflected in high attendance rates. Their punctuality is good and they move around the school calmly and quietly to ensure lessons start promptly.
- Pupils' behaviour is managed extremely well by staff. Pupils' excellent attitudes ensure no time is wasted in lessons. Teachers rarely have to reprimand pupils because they set tasks which challenge and captivate them. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are helped very well and incidents of poor behaviour are extremely unusual.
- Pupils show a high regard for one another, respecting differences and working together readily in class situations. They confirm that behaviour is typically good, and say that bullying is not an issue. Pupils learn about different types of bullying, including how to stay safe when using the internet.
- Pupils are adamant that they feel safe and could turn to an adult if they were to feel unsafe. There are clear procedures in the school to deal with issues should they arise. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who completed Parent View felt their children are well looked after and kept safe.
- The broad and rich curriculum successfully gives pupils a sense of wonder in the world around them and contributes very well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This was seen in many lessons, for example, through reading scenes from *Oliver Twist* and then interpreting them in drama.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is a very effective leader who has the confidence of staff and parents and carers. The deputy headteacher provides good support. Having worked successfully to secure improvements in behaviour, the curriculum and teaching, school leaders are focusing fully on developing pupils' progress and achievement.
- The relatively new leadership structure is empowering leaders at all levels to take a full part in raising achievement. Staff share leaders' determination to provide the best for all pupils and to ensure there is no discrimination. Middle leaders are taking an increasingly prominent role in raising achievement through guiding colleagues, and by rigorously monitoring assessments and teaching across the school.
- Leaders at all levels, including governors, understand the school's strengths and what it needs to do to improve. Robust assessment systems have been developed in recent years and these are used stringently to check pupils' progress. Leaders ensure that provision is constantly reviewed

and adapted to meet individual needs.

- Leaders have clear plans to strengthen the coordination of phonics teaching across the school and to develop a consistent approach to teaching phonics and handwriting.
- The robust management of teachers' performance is linked to professional training. Decisions about teachers' pay and promotion are linked closely to the quality of their teaching.
- The curriculum has been overhauled in recent years. It is based on themes such as The Second World War and provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills across different subjects. The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' academic and personal development and makes a very worthwhile contribution to pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.
- During the past two years the school has benefited from the local authority helping the leadership team to improve the quality of teaching and to train subject leaders and governors for their leadership roles.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows the school well and is fully committed to ensuring all pupils achieve as well as they can. Governors are involved in checking the school's work and understand the data because members have had training. This has made the governing body more effective in carrying out its monitoring role and developing its ability to challenge the school in any areas of weakness. Governors ensure that the school's finances are managed effectively, and make sure that pupil premium funding is properly used to impact on pupils' progress. They check teachers' performance and ensure that the salary structure is closely linked to pupils' progress. Safeguarding policies and practices have been overhauled in recent years. They are robust, and the governing body ensures that they fully meet requirements.

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

Unique reference number	125188
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	403571

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sian Boden
Headteacher	Roger Blackburn
Date of previous school inspection	19 September 2007
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