

Epsom Primary and Nursery School

Pound Lane, Epsom, Surrey KT19 8SD

Inspection dates

3–4 July 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have established a school where pupils' behaviour is outstanding, and teaching is good in most subjects. Consequently, most current pupils are making strong progress from their starting points.
- The curriculum interests pupils. However, leadership and teaching are not as well developed in all subjects as in English, mathematics and science. The depth and challenge of teaching in different subjects, and the progression of pupils' learning, vary.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils feel extremely well supported and highly valued. They appreciate the many exciting activities that extend beyond the school day.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is extremely well promoted. Pupils show that they understand the importance of listening to the opinions of others and being respectful.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and of the quality of education it provides.
- Senior leaders make good use of information about pupils' progress to inform their work. On occasion, though, teachers do not use this information precisely enough to ensure that classroom provision truly challenges all pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils receive carefully tailored additional support to help them to achieve their best. Effective teaching helps them to catch up if they fall behind in their learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress. This is due to effective teaching and the reliable additional support provided by teaching assistants.
- Children get off to a good start in the engaging early years environment. They enjoy rich learning experiences that help them to make good progress across all areas of their learning.
- Governors fulfil their roles effectively. They have an accurate understanding of the school's work and use this well to ensure that the right decisions are made.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve teaching, learning and assessment so that they are consistently effective in all subjects, including suitable challenge for all pupils.
- Further strengthen pupils' progress to ensure that a higher proportion achieve at or above expected national standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Further develop the effectiveness of subject leadership to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching across the full curriculum and to promote pupils' progress reliably in all subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders are tenacious in promoting their ambitious expectations for staff and pupils. They have established a school where high expectations for pupils' behaviour are matched by a firm drive for good-quality teaching. Leaders have instilled a sense of pride in the school that everyone shares. This is underpinned by senior leaders' strong sense of moral purpose and their determination to improve the life chances of all pupils, including those who are most disadvantaged.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about their children's experiences of school. They value the school's caring ethos, reflected in comments recorded in Parent View, such as 'We love the emphasis on diversity and inclusion and its strong sense of community.' Pupils confirmed to inspectors that everyone in school is friendly and the teachers care for them well. They like their teachers and want to please them, and they enjoy their lessons.
- Leaders have supported teachers well to improve their skills through very effective training. The approaches to teaching being promoted by senior leaders are having a clear positive impact on current pupils' rates of progress. The systems leaders have introduced to assess pupils' progress allow them to hold teachers to account.
- Teachers and support staff are well supported by leaders. New teachers to the school appreciate how effectively they are helped to develop in their roles. They recognise that the training leaders provide has helped them to be ambitious for themselves and their pupils. One teacher, new to the profession, said, 'The senior leaders have great ambition for us, and they make us see our potential.'
- The work of subject leaders is not consistently well developed. Leaders are rightly reviewing the school's wider curriculum provision, responding to their accurate analysis that not all subjects' content is covered reliably. For example, pupils' opportunities to build progressively upon their earlier learning are somewhat limited in history and geography.
- Provision for pupils' SMSC development is very well thought out. The books pupils read and the topics they study provide them with valuable opportunities to consider and debate moral and ethical issues. The school's inclusive ethos ensures that pupils learn to be tolerant, to respect others and to understand the importance of treating everyone equally. Pupils enjoy the wide range of activities provided beyond the school day and curriculum, including, for example, yoga and photography.
- Leaders and governors use additional funding well and take effective steps to ensure that it is having an impact on the progress and well-being of current pupils. For example, additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used to help them access extra support in class through small-group work that deepens their knowledge and skills, promoting their good progress.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is experienced and effective. Governors have wide-ranging expertise, including in education and safeguarding. This enables them to probe leaders' analysis of the school's effectiveness very well. The minutes from governors' meetings reflect their regular challenge to leaders about the quality of education provided by the school. They check the reliability of the information leaders provide about pupils' performance.
- Governors visit the school regularly to talk to staff and pupils to satisfy themselves that the school is delivering a good quality of education.
- Governors fully understand their responsibilities for safeguarding. Governors undertake robust checks to ensure that procedures are followed rigorously and staff work effectively with external partners to support vulnerable pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong safeguarding culture in the school. Leaders have used current government legislation to produce a suitable safeguarding policy, which is available publicly on the school's website and to visitors when they enter the school.
- Leaders ensure that staff are well trained and regularly updated in safeguarding procedures. Staff are kept up to date with the latest safeguarding guidance, including in keeping children safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.
- Staff know what to do should they have a concern about a child. Leaders work well with external agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Detailed chronological records of any concern, and the outcome of any actions that have been taken, are kept systematically.
- Leaders maintain a visible presence around school that inspires parents' and pupils' confidence. Key stage 2 pupils understand the importance of keeping safe and the risks children can face, for example from 'grooming'. Pupils appreciate what the school does to help them to keep safe, both in and out of school. Pupils show understanding about how to keep themselves safe when they are online and they understand the risks of cyber bullying.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have strong subject knowledge, particularly in English and mathematics, which have been a focus for recent improvement. Teachers communicate learning clearly in these subjects, helping pupils make good progress during lessons.
- Teachers encourage pupils to talk about their learning. This helps pupils to consolidate and extend their understanding. Teachers use questioning skilfully, checking pupils' progress and probing their understanding. As a result, teachers promptly address pupils' misconceptions.

- Older pupils benefit from carefully tailored questions that help them to think for themselves and encourage debate, for example when classroom partners confidently discussed whether a character being considered was upset or angry.
- Most pupils learn to use phonics effectively to support their early reading development. As pupils move through the school, they are introduced to high-quality fiction that challenges their thinking. Pupils' reading stimulates their writing development. When writing during English lessons, pupils are encouraged to apply increasingly complex grammatical structures to make their writing more interesting.
- In mathematics, teachers use clear explanations and demonstrations to develop pupils' understanding of calculation and mathematical operations. However, pupils' opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills to solving mathematical problems are limited.
- The extra activities teachers provide to help those pupils who have fallen behind to catch up and to identify and remedy any underachievement are effective. Teachers give careful attention to helping pupils reach the expected standard for their ages. However, they do not consistently provide activities that challenge the most able pupils.
- Teaching inspires pupils to work diligently and try hard in lessons. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND are well supported to access activities in lessons so that they can learn successfully alongside their peers. Learning support assistants are well trained and deployed effectively. Consequently, their work has a positive effect on pupils' outcomes.
- Teaching and learning are not as well developed in some subjects as they are in mathematics, English and science. Pupils have some interesting opportunities to extend their writing skills, but not consistently across all subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils take enormous pride in their work and are keen to do well. They exhibit maturity and dedication in lessons and are committed to improving their work where they can. For example, pupils collaborate very well with each other or show success when working silently, whenever asked to. Lessons take place in a supportive atmosphere which builds pupils' confidence. Pupils demonstrate confidence to share their answers or disagree with others when debating ideas and reflecting upon issues.
- Pupils relish the rewards they achieve for attending frequently, behaving well and working hard. They take immense pride in the badges they wear in recognition of these achievements. Pupils are eager to contribute to the school's decision-making processes and take their leadership roles and responsibilities very seriously, for example when they serve as prefects or playground 'mediators'.
- Parents value the contribution made by the school to their children's personal development. One parent's comment summed up the feeling of many: 'My eldest

daughter is in Year 6 and about to leave. She has grown into the girl she has become because of the staff and I can't thank them enough.'

- Pupils listen thoughtfully to each other's opinions. They are very respectful of differences and know that all people should be treated with courtesy and consideration. Inspectors observed pupils maturely discussing tolerance, for example, and the importance of mutual respect.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- The exceptionally strong relationships between adults and pupils and among pupils underpin the harmonious atmosphere in the school.
- Leaders ensure that the very clear systems of positive behaviour management are well understood by pupils and consistently applied by staff. Pupils manage their behaviour well. For example, all pupils, including the very youngest children, line up very sensibly, as expected, as they wait for lunch. Consequently, conduct across the school and at playtimes is exemplary.
- Parents spoke highly of the school's work in this area. Many parents praised the level of care that staff show towards children, summed up in one parent's comment: 'My son is nurtured, safe and cared for at school.'
- Pupils and parents value the quality of specialist support, advice and guidance provided by staff in the school. Staff promote children's emotional health and well-being and help minimise disruption to learning.
- Pupils say bullying in school is exceptionally rare. Most have never heard of it occurring. All the pupils who spoke with inspectors said that adults deal swiftly and effectively with any concerns they may have.
- The school is highly inclusive. Exclusion is applied only very rarely and then reluctantly. Leaders try to ensure that, if possible, pupils with SEND are never excluded.
- Leaders successfully place a very strong emphasis on the importance of good attendance, supporting pupils well to achieve attendance which is in line with national figures. This includes implementing highly effective systems to improve the attendance of pupils who are at risk of becoming persistent absentees.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' progress from key stage 1 to key stage 2 has been variable over time, including in below-average progress in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 2 in 2018. An increasing proportion of pupils, especially in upper key stage 2, are making good progress now, especially in writing.
- Leaders have taken decisive action to raise pupils' achievement. Throughout the school, most pupils are now making good progress from their varied starting points.
- Pupils with SEND typically make good progress. Leaders monitor the progress of these pupils carefully, providing effective extra support promptly when necessary.

- The school's current assessment information and work seen in pupils' books show that disadvantaged pupils are making good progress and that gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils are diminishing, especially in writing.
- Current pupils' work shows that, throughout the school, they have greatly improved their knowledge of spelling, grammar and punctuation. Pupils link their reading skills effectively with their writing, which supports the fluency and interest of what they write.
- Pupils' work shows some good examples of the use of literacy and numeracy skills in subjects other than English and mathematics. For example, in science, older pupils used their literacy skills to record their experiments in the correct way when describing a fair test. However, pupils do not develop their subject knowledge and skills in the wider curriculum as well as they do in English and mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders place a strong emphasis upon the importance of nurturing the very youngest children and giving them a good start to their education. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the provision's strengths and the priorities for improvement.
- Leaders have set high expectations for the children's learning and have developed a well-resourced, inviting, language-rich learning environment. Staff have high expectations of children and what they could and should achieve as two-, three- and four-year-olds. Adults encourage children constantly and help them to maintain a focused enthusiasm for learning.
- Children enter the Nursery class with knowledge, understanding and skills often lower than typically found for their age, particularly in communication and language. Most children make good progress in all areas of learning because they are well taught and are provided with interesting activities which are well suited to their needs.
- Teachers' accurate assessments indicate that many children who remain in the school from Nursery to the end of Reception achieve a good level of development.
- All staff receive very effective training, and classroom practices are reviewed to constantly improve provision. Staff have high expectations of children and what they can achieve. The children are provided with helpful choices to explore and deepen their understanding purposefully across a range of curriculum areas. At times, however, the activities adults provide lack suitable challenge for the most able children.
- Adults understand the additional needs of disadvantaged children and those with SEND well. Adults provide skilful support to enable these children to make good progress.
- Staff develop positive, nurturing relationships with the children. Children are inspired to play and learn together, take turns and listen to the ideas of others carefully. They behave well and enjoy engaging visitors in conversation and explaining what they are doing.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective. All adults are sensitive to children's needs. They work well with parents, welcoming them into school and encouraging them to contribute towards their children's learning experiences. One parent summarised the

feelings of many, saying, 'The teachers care really well for the children. My child is very happy here.'

- From the start of the early years, a strong emphasis on phonics and on learning to write fluently benefits children's reading and writing skills. During the inspection, children were observed writing well, in simple sentences, about what they would like to be when they grow up.
- Leaders have ensured that transition through Nursery, Reception and into Year 1 is well planned and effective.

School details

Unique reference number	124956
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10088193

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

Type of school	Primary and nursery school
School category	Community maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	602
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Wilcox
Headteacher	Emma Smith
Head of school	Michelle Pollard
Telephone number	01372 720 608
Website	www.epsomprimaryschool.co.uk/
Email address	office@epsom.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 December 2015

Information about this school

- Epsom Primary and Nursery School is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is not, or believed to be not, their first language is much higher than the national average.
- Pupils who attend the school come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. Nearly half the pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average. Most pupils within this group have speech, language and communication difficulties.

- Children in the early years foundation stage are provided with specialist part-time funded nursery sessions. Parents can pay for additional hours in the Nursery classes for three-year-olds and in the two-year-old provision, known as First Steps. There are currently two Reception classes.
- The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is higher than in most other schools.
- The school runs a breakfast club, an after-school club and a holiday club, which are open to all children.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all classes. All lessons were jointly observed with leaders.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, members of staff, including those new to the profession, representatives of the governing body and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' outcomes, leaders' evaluation of the school's performance, minutes from governing body meetings, the school development plan and monitoring and evaluation records relating to the quality of teaching. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also checked.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally during the school day and observed them on the playground, at lunch and in lessons. They met formally with a group of pupils with their books to talk about their learning, behaviour and safety. Inspectors also listened to pupils read. In addition, inspectors considered the views of pupils by analysing the 279 responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- Inspectors looked at work in pupils' books alongside senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed an achievements assembly.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors took account of the 246 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and an additional 146 free-text comments made by parents.
- Inspectors took note of the 74 staff responses to Ofsted's inspection survey.

Inspection team

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